

CITY OF NEWTON

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2008

Present: David Koses (Chair) Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer) Sgt. Norcross (Police Traffic Bureau) Ald. Vicky Danberg, Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Also: Ald. Lennon, Ald. Merrill, Ald. Linsky, Ald. Baker, Ald. Freedman, Ald. Lappin, Cub Scout Troop (Pack 370)

TC25-08      ALD. LENNON, GERST, MERRILL AND BAKER requesting traffic  
(475-04)      study/safety analysis of WAVERLEY AVENUE from WASHINGTON STREET to WARD STREET. Based on habitual speeding and a concern for pedestrian safety measures on WAVERLEY AVENUE (especially in the area of Burr Park and Bigelow Middle School), the analysis should include safety enhancements and speed controls as a way to mitigate the speeding problem along this corridor (Ward 1).

**ACTION:**      **HELD 4-0**

**NOTE:**      Ald. Lennon addressed the Committee and said that Waverley Avenue has been of concern to many people and, on his opinion, warranted a discussion. Ald. Merrill strongly felt the speed was too fast in this area.

Traffic Engineer Clint Schuckel noted that significant speeding occurs along Waverley Avenue. Due to relatively high traffic volumes, he does not feel that this street would be an appropriate location for a raised crosswalk, and speed humps are not allowed per City Ordinance. He went on to say that MassHighway would likely not approve a speed limit change. He suggested targeted speed enforcement; conversion of a flashing beacon at Franklin Street into a pedestrian activated warning light and/or adding edgeline striping to define 12-foot travel lanes in each direction (with a 5' shoulder).

Terry Yoffee, Chair of the Bigelow Traffic Committee, noted that many parents had hoped that their children could walk to school. There are no safe access points to cross Waverley Avenue. Ms. Yoffee would like to see a more permanent strategy to solve the speeding problem.

David Koses favored a pedestrian actuated signal at the intersection of Waverley & Arlington Street to make it more convenient for children to cross at that point. However, due to a curve along Waverley, sightlines are very poor at this intersection.

Ald. Danberg also felt that there should be a location on Waverley for a pedestrian activated light.

The Committee voted to hold the item until the June Traffic Council meeting to give residents an opportunity to review and try to come to consensus on possible strategies. In the interim there will be some police details.

#TC6-08      ALD. LENNON requesting discussion, analysis and possible  
(372-06)      implementation of traffic calming measures on East Side Parkway and at  
the intersection of Lewis Terrace, Lewis Street and Newtonville Av. (Ward 1).

**ACTION:**      **NAN 4-0**

#TC42-08      DAVID KOSES, requesting discussion of a raised crosswalk on Parkview  
Avenue between Cabot School and the playground. (Ward 2)

**ACTION:**      **NAN 4-0**

**NOTE:**      These two items (#TC5-08 and #TC42-08) were discussed together. Mr. Schuckel said that the crossing at East Side Parkway and Winchester Road is heavily used. (There is a crossing guard.) His recommendation included targeted speed enforcement. Under current City Ordinance, a speed bump could not be installed.

Clint Schuckel said that the peak ½ hour was between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM, with the number of cars totaling approximately 129 and number of pedestrians crossing Parkview equaling 55. Mr. Schuckel said that a raised crosswalk would not slow traffic until well into the school area. A speed hump at the beginning of the one-way section would be a more effective and cheaper option if a vertical deflection were to be added.

Ms. Fallon said that she walks to school with her children crossing with a crossing guard at Winchester Road. She said that, in her opinion, a raised crosswalk on Parkview Avenue between the school and the playground would allow motorists to better see pedestrians. David Koses agreed that a raised crosswalk would be helpful in this location, particularly since school officials no longer use orange cones to block off a pathway between the school and the field. Ald. Danberg said that a raised crosswalk would make the children more visible. Clint Schuckel and Sergeant Norcross did not favor a raised crosswalk across Parkview because, in part, children cross the street in various locations, and would not necessarily walk to the raised crosswalk in order to cross Parkview.

Sgt. Norcross asked how the Parkview location would measure up to the present criteria for traffic calming. In response, Mr. Koses said that this location would not score highly, and for that reason and others, perhaps the traffic calming criteria should be reviewed. Ald. Danberg agreed with re-examining the criteria.

David Koses suggested consideration of a four-way stop at the intersection of Newtonville Avenue, Lewis Terrace and Lewis Street. However, due to the geometry of the intersection, this concept was not supported among other Traffic Council members.

#TC7-08      CANDACE HAVENS & ALD. LENNON on behalf of Vernon Street

(385-06) residents requesting speed study and consideration of traffic calming or other measures to assure safe conditions. (Ward 1) **HELD ON 3/8/07**

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 4-0**

**NOTE:** Ald. Lennon said this item was originally docketed to deal with speeding. Ald. Lennon asked whether school zone signs could be posted that say “20 mph when school is in session”. Mr. Schuckel stated that the Law Department determined that school zone signs had to indicate the 20 mph speed limit only applies to school start and release times (signs must indicate specific time periods, and cannot simply say “20 mph when children are present”, “20 mph school days” or “20 mph when school is in session”). Other members of Traffic Council suggested another discussion with the Law Department to ensure that this time limitation language is required.

Clint Schuckel developed a design plan for improving the intersection of Vernon Street and Park Street, which was discussed on 3/8/07 as well as at this meeting. Residents and Traffic Council members supported the concept plan. Mr. Schuckel moved approval of forwarding the concept plan to Public Facilities, to remove approximately 4 cars worth of parking on the northwest corner of this intersection, and to review school zone signage with the Law Department. Traffic Council members supported this motion.

#TC29-08 **ALD. DANBERG, COLETTI, VANCE, FISCHMAN , CICCONE & LINSKY** requesting discussion with appropriate city staff to identify possible locations throughout the City for installation of pedestrian activated warning signals at crosswalks to be funded by the Parking Meter receipts reserve fund {01-24-08@9:12AM]

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 4-0** (See report)

**NOTE:** Ald. Danberg felt that it would be useful to use some of the parking meter receipt funds to establish pedestrian activated signals at various crosswalks in the City. Ald. Linsky felt strongly that the intersection of Crafts and Linwood should receive a pedestrian activated signal as there have been unfortunate accidents involving children at this location.

Clint Schuckel said that the town of Wellesley has installed about two dozen pedestrian activated signals. The signals include signage that say “pedestrians in crosswalk when flashing”. Conduits must be installed and connected to a pole, and a push button that starts the flashing. Pedestrians that cross the street should use common sense to ensure that vehicles have come to a stop. Studies show that cars do stop, but signage could be added for pedestrians that say “cross when cars stop”. Electricity use is minimal. Some criteria that could be used include the functional road classification of the street, with at least 6,000 vehicle trips per day, proximity to a school, and pedestrian volume.

A member of Friends of Newton Centre spoke. He recommended installing a pedestrian activated signal at the intersection on Pleasant Street near CVS and Beacon Street to the east of Langley Road. Sgt. Norcross mentioned that there could be a problem with removing some parking spaces from businesses in Newton Centre.

The Committee recommended approval of a memo to the Mayor's office that would request approval of the item in concept, adding the words "and other sources", and to constructing the first four pedestrian activated warning signals at the following four locations: (1) Crafts Street and Linwood Avenue; (2) Washington Street and Harvard Street; (3) A location along Waverley Avenue; and (4) Centre Street near Pleasant Street. It was further recommended that the City examine and prioritize additional locations for pedestrian activated warning signals, based on a set of criteria that includes the volume of traffic, the volume of pedestrian crossings, and locations that would encourage safer walking access to schools.

#TC21-08      ALD. FREEDMAN, FISCHMAN & LAPPIN requesting a review of pedestrian safety in the area of DEDHAM STREET from NAHANTON STREET to BROOKLINE STREET to improve safety for students and adults crossing this dangerous stretch of Dedham Street (Ward 8). [01-02-08 @ 11:46 A.M.]

**ACTION:**      NAN 4-0

**NOTE:**      Clint Schuckel said that "Keep Clear" pavement markings, "Do Not Block Intersection" signs, walk signals and push buttons have been added to this intersection. There have not been many accidents at this location. Mr. Schuckel noted that there is not much pedestrian activity at Nahanton Street and Dedham. Coordinated signals could be helpful. Ald. Lappin would like to see this area on a list for improvement when more funding is available. If this intersection experiences increased traffic volume in the future, the traffic signal could be relocated, and a one-way traffic system around the triangle could be created at that time.

The Committee voted NAN with the provision that the Traffic Engineer would paint markings with thermo plastic.

#TC22-08      ALESSANDRO PORRO, 130 Dedham Street, requesting that the speed limit be reduced (from 30 mph to 25 mph) on DEDHAM STREET between STONY BRAE ROAD and the COUNTRYSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Ward 8).

**ACTION:**      NAN 4-0

**NOTE:**      Mr. Porro was present and talked about a fatal crash at this location. Mr. Schuckel noted that the fatal crash at this location was due to excessive speed. Mr. Schuckel noted that the speed limit along this section of Dedham Street is already 25 mph, so the 30 mph signs are incorrect.

Traffic Council voted to remove the incorrect 30 mph signs, install new 25 mph signs, and install a "school zone ahead" sign along this portion of Dedham Street.

TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting that the following truck exclusions and speed limits that have neither received State approval to date, nor meet State criteria for favorable consideration, be rescinded:

**TPR Section 83 (Truck Exclusions)**

Bacon Street  
Bernard Street  
Bridge Street  
Centre Street  
Charlemont Street  
Charles St (Ward 4)  
Charlesbank Road (requires Watertown approval)  
Chestnut Street (Wash to Rte 9)  
Christina Street  
Commonwealth Avenue (Carriageway: Washington to Rowe)  
Crescent Ave (Newton Centre)  
Crescent Street(Newtonville)  
Cross Street  
Davis Ave  
Dearborn Street  
Goddard Street  
Grove St (Route 95 to Washington Street)  
Middlesex Road  
Norwood Ave(Newton Centre)  
Norwood Ave(Newtonville)  
Richmond Road  
Roland Street  
St. James Street (requires Watertown approval)  
Tremont Street  
Wallace Street  
Watertown Street

**TPR Section 84 (Speed Limits)**

Beacon Street  
Centre Street  
Cummings Street  
Fuller Street  
Windsor Street  
Wolcott Street

**TPR Section 84 (Speed Limits)**

Beacon Street  
Centre Street  
Cummings Street  
Fuller Street  
Windsor Street  
Wolcott Street

**NOTE:** Traffic Council discussed the status of various truck exclusion and speed limits which are in the City regulations but do not have State approval. However, this item had not appeared on a Docket; therefore Traffic Council is expected to take action at their May meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Chairman

# Traffic Council

Thursday, April 17, 2008

# Agenda

- 1. Requesting a study on Waverley Ave to improve safety
  - # TC 25-08 (475-04)
- 2. Requesting a discussion and analysis for possible traffic calming measures on E.S. Parkway
  - # TC 6-08 (372-06)
- 3. Requesting a discussion of a raised x-walk on Parkview Ave.
  - # TC 42-08
- 4. Requesting speed study on Vernon Street
  - # TC 7-08 (385-06)
- 5. Requesting a discussion to identify possible locations for pedestrian activated warning signals
  - # TC 29-08
- 6. Requesting a study in the area Dedham bet. Nahanton St & Brookline St for pedestrian safety
  - # TC 21-08
- 7. Requesting to reduce speed limit from 30MPH to 25 MPH on Dedham St
  - # TC 22-08
- 8. Requesting the following truck exclusions and speed limits be rescinded
  - # TC xx-08



# 1. Waverley Avenue (Washington St - Ward St)

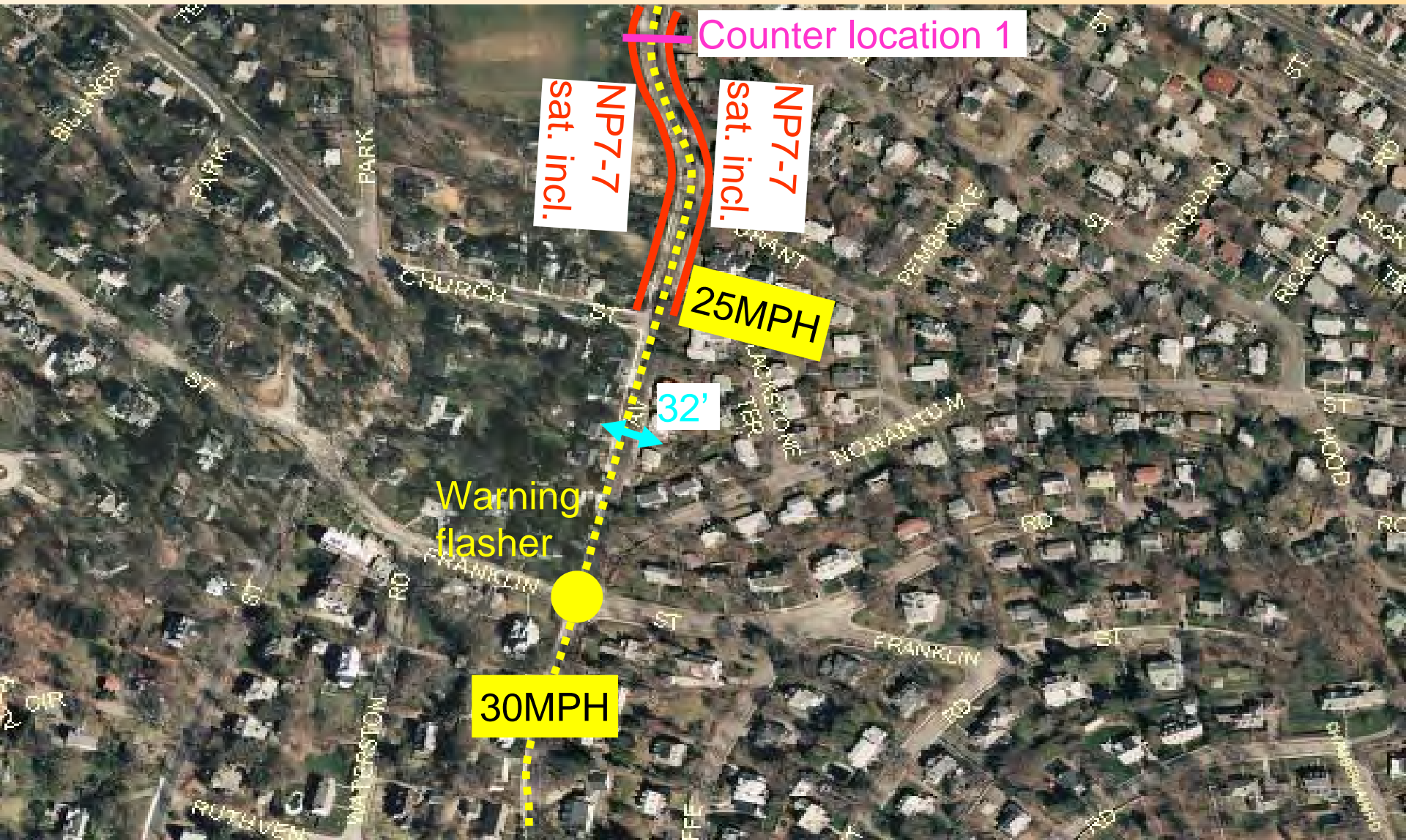
# TC 25-08 (475-04)

Traffic study/analysis

Waverley Ave (1/4)



# Waverley Ave (2/4)



# Waverley Ave (3/4)



# Waverley Ave (4/4)





# Study Results

Waverley Ave	85th percentile speed (speed limit)	Daily volume
Location 1 Near # 106 Waverley Ave.	35 mph (25 mph)	8,800
Location 2 Near # 310 Waverley Ave.	42 mph (30 mph)	10,550
Location 3 Near # 391 Waverley Ave.	35 mph (30mph)	10,800

Police record: 4 accidents in the past 5 yrs

Road Class= Major Collector (5,000 to 10,000 ADT)

# Recommendations

- Location exceeds daily traffic for vertical deflections (8,000 cars/day)
- Speed limit change would not be effective, nor approved by State
- Targeted speed enforcement
- Convert flashing beacon at Franklin St to pedestrian activated warning light
- Add edgeline striping to define 11 foot travel lane on each direction (5' shoulder)

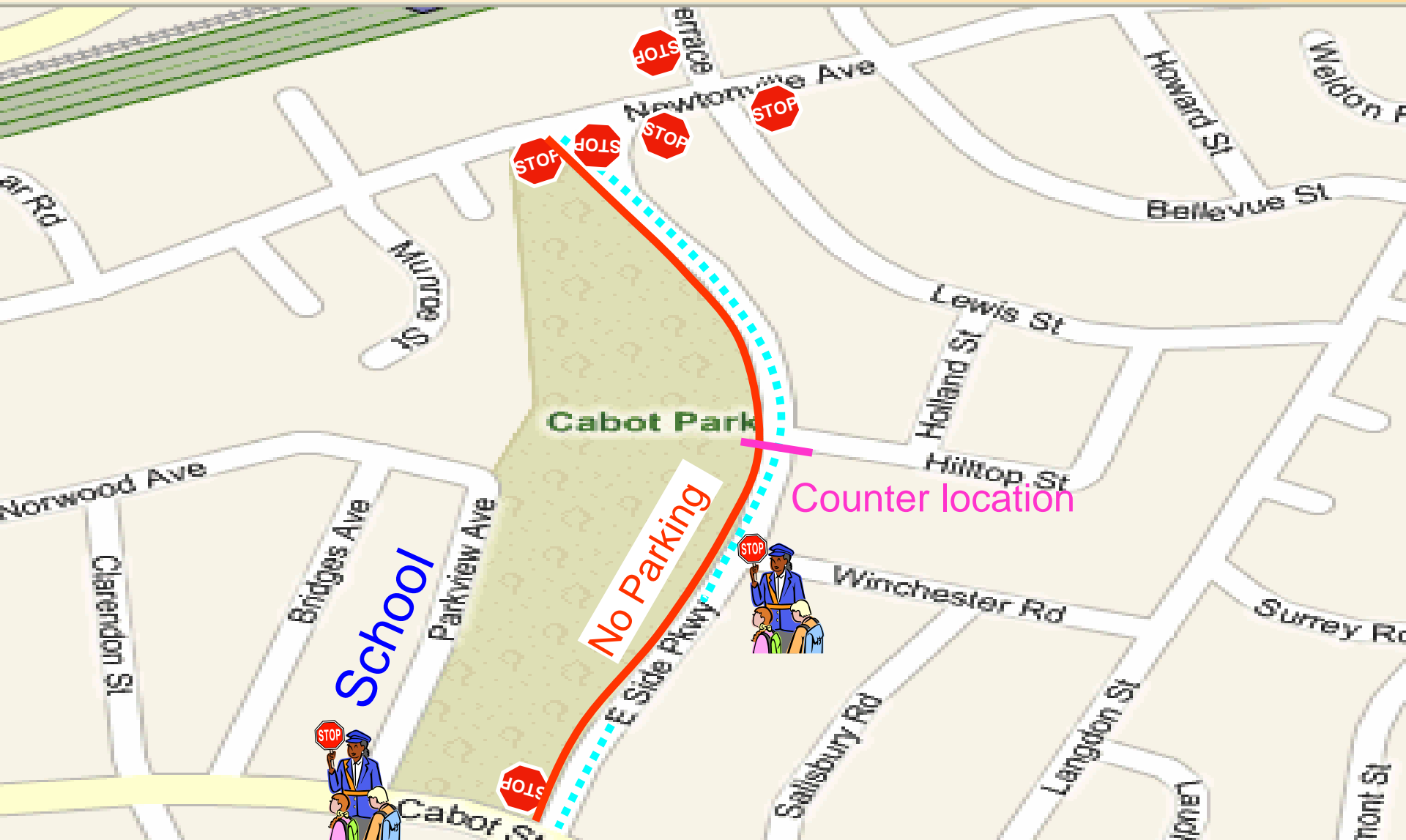
## 2. East Side Parkway

# TC 6-08 (372-06)

Requesting a discussion for possible  
traffic calming measures



# East Side Parkway



# East Side Parkway at Newtonville





# East Side Parkway near Hilltop



# Traffic Counts

East Side Parkway	85th percentile speed	Daily volume	Ped. crossing @ Winchester Rd (peak ½ hr)
<b>Near Hilltop</b>	35 MPH	2,500	46

Police records: 3 accidents in the past 5 yrs

# Conclusions

- Crossing at East Side Parkway and Winchester is heavily used, includes crossing guard
- Light traffic during the peak hours

## Recommendation

- Targeted speed enforcement

# 3. Parkview Avenue

# TC 42-08

Request for raised x-walk in front of  
Cabot School



# Parkview Avenue

















DO NOT  
ENTER

573227

# Traffic counts

- Date: 4/17/08
- Peak  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour = 8:00AM - 8:30AM
- Number of cars = 129
- Number of pedestrians crossing Parkview  
= 55

# Conclusions

- Parkview is on City list for microsurfacing (1/8" overlay)
- The existing TPR-92 regulation ("do not enter school days") was superseded by the latest one-way restriction on Parkview Ave. Traffic Council should rescind TPR-92
- Parkview is not heavily used by through traffic, other than school pick-up/drop-off times
- A raised crosswalk would not slow traffic until well into the school area
- A speed hump at the beginning of the one-way section would be a more effective and cheaper option, if a vertical deflection was added
- Adding a fence along the field with an opening at the cross walk would concentrate pedestrians at crosswalk, now many pedestrians do not use crosswalk

# 4. Vernon Street

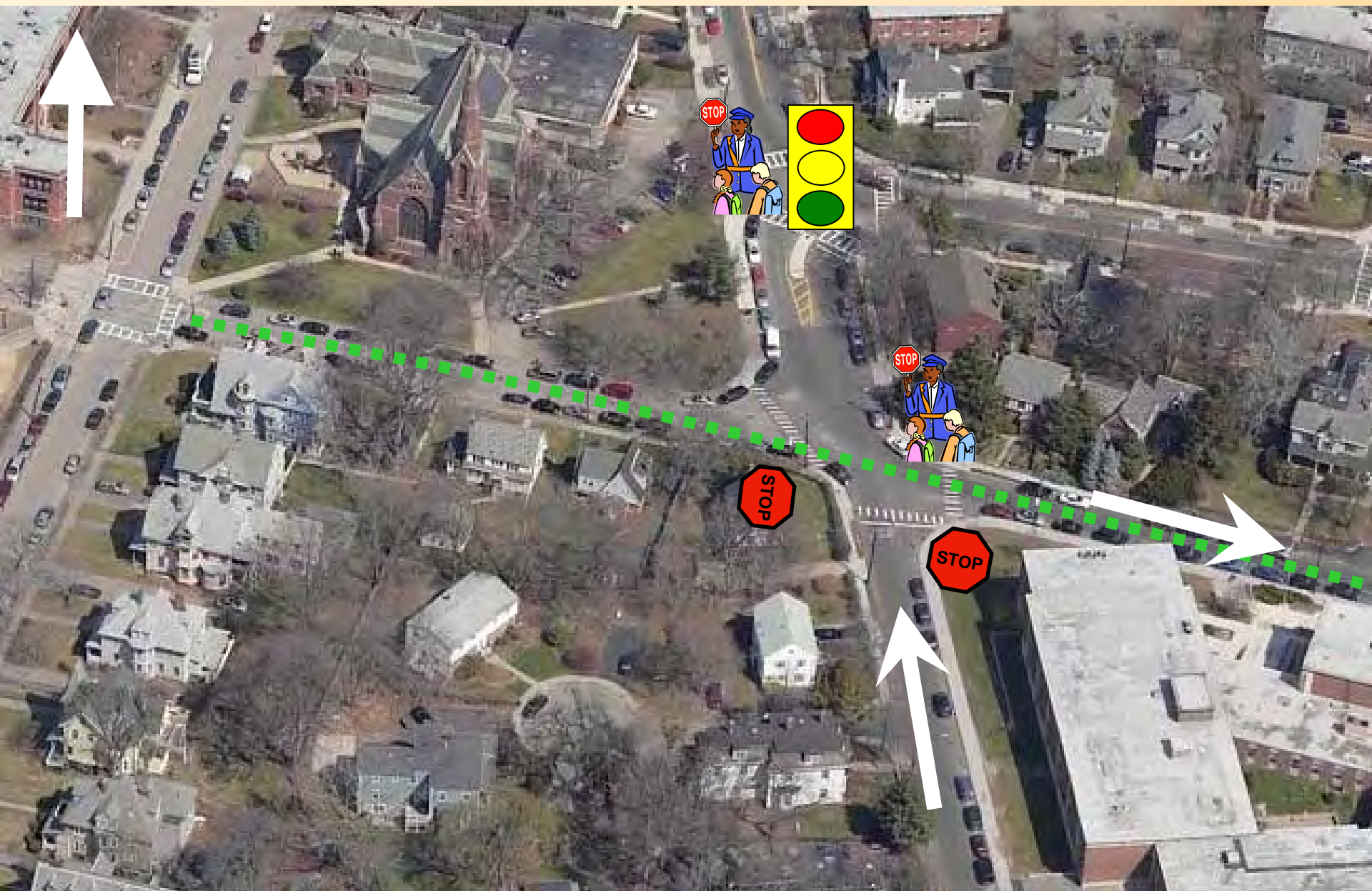
# TC 7-08 (385-06)

Requesting speed study on Vernon  
Street

# Vernon Street









# Vernon St: Traffic Council History

- 9/18/03: Moved bus stop closer to Park
- 12/16/04: 3-way Stop voted NAN
- 10/19/06: Rescinded no parking 4:30-6:30
- 3/8/07: Last discussion of this item

Also, we have modified parking restrictions on  
Arlington St and Park St adjacent to school



Counter location

750'







# Park St @ Vernon St, northbound





# Park St @ Vernon St, southbound



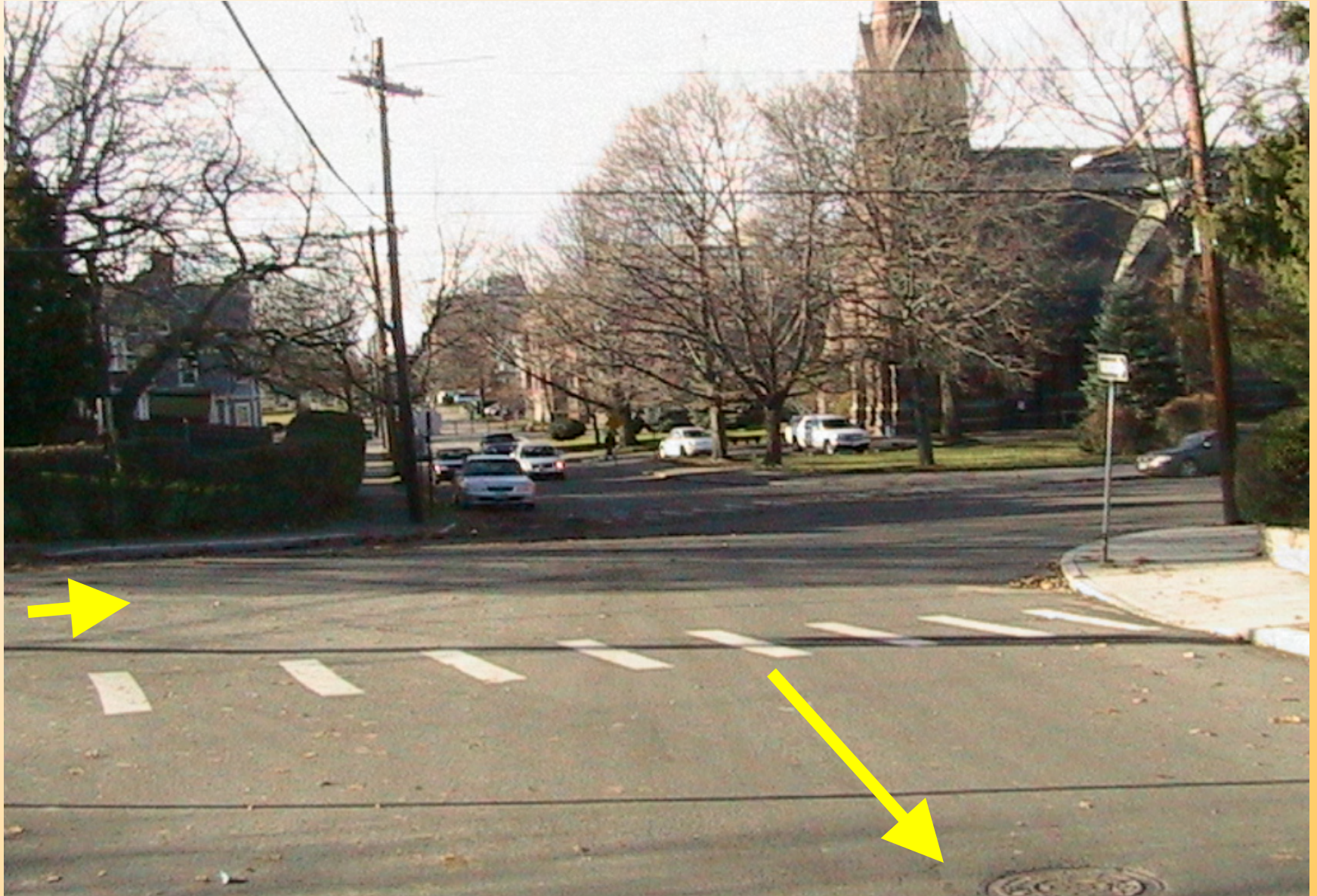


# Vernon St @ Park St, eastbound





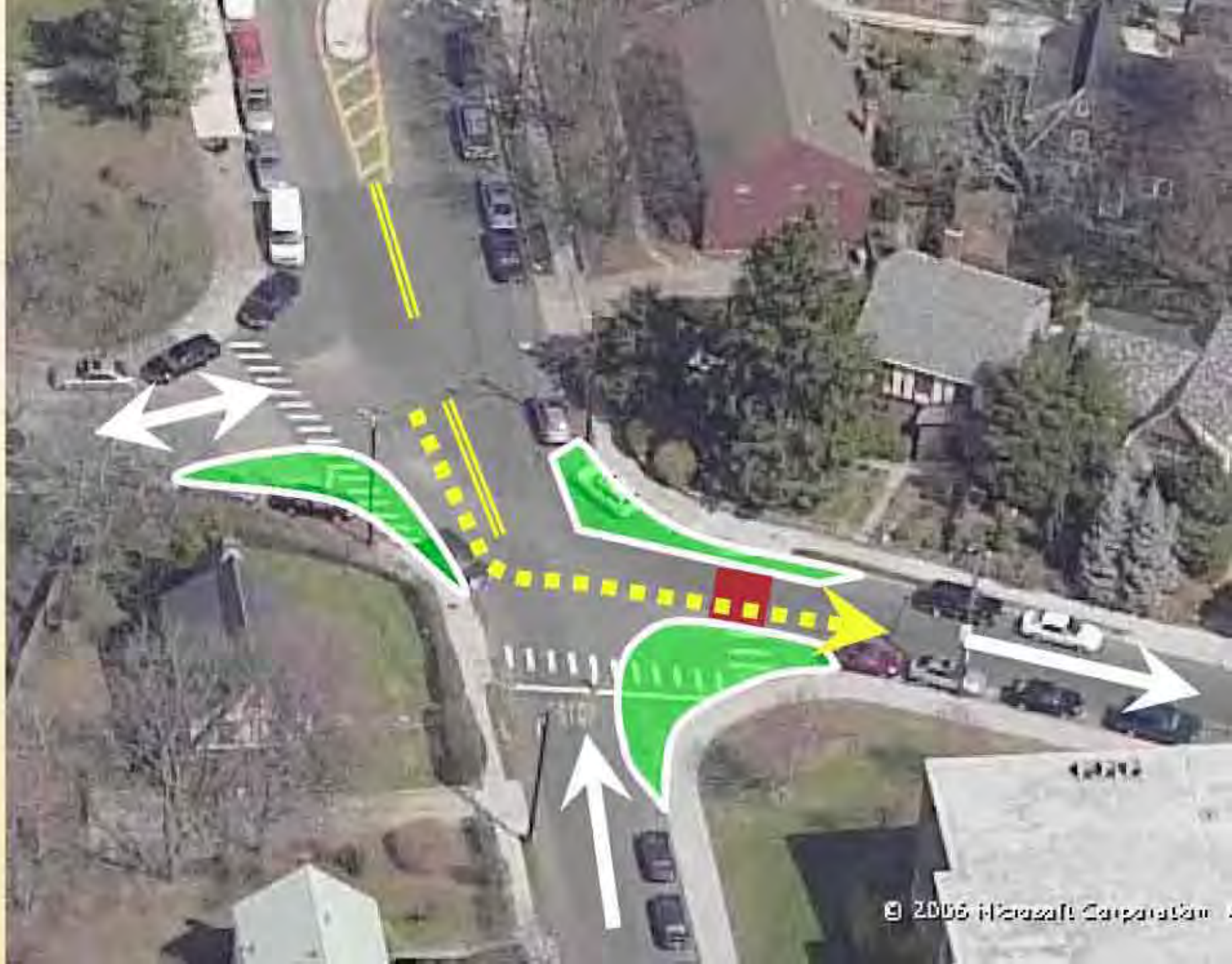
# Vernon St @ Park St, westbound



# Background

- Unposted speed limit of 30 mph
- No accident history
- Bigelow MS adjacent
- Underwood ES nearby
- Vehicle counts:
  - April 08 counts: 1,700 cars per day
  - April 08 counts: 85%th speed is 32 mph





# Recommendations

- Curb extension project at Vernon/Park
- Do not docket until design plan prepared

# 5. Pedestrian activated warning signals

# TC 29-08

Requesting a discussion to identify possible locations for pedestrian activated warning signals



# Rt.135 at Amherst Ped. crossing signal in Wellesley



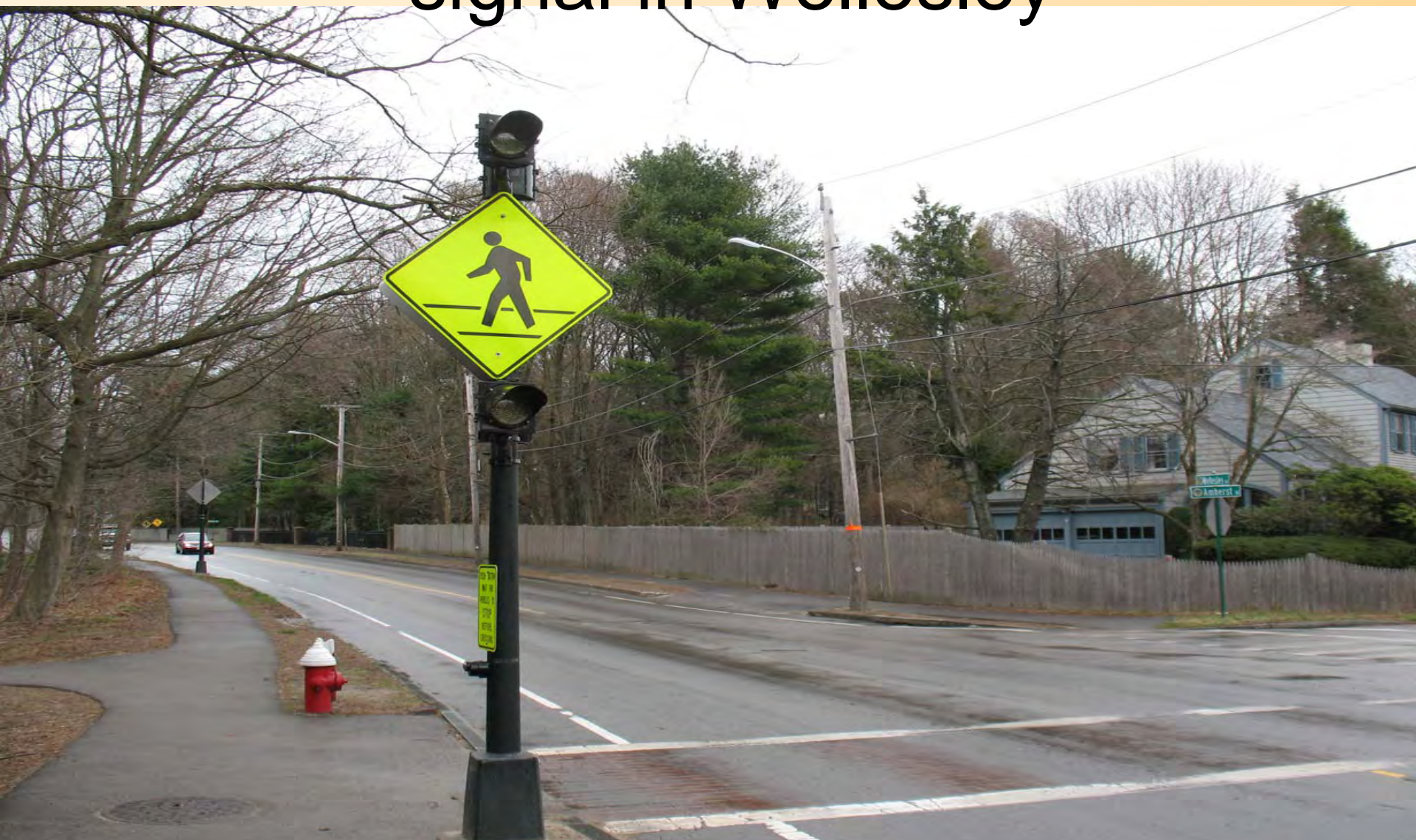


# Rt.135 at Amherst Ped. crossing signal in Wellesley





# Rt.135 at Amherst Ped. crossing signal in Wellesley





# Rt.135 at Amherst Ped. crossing signal in Wellesley

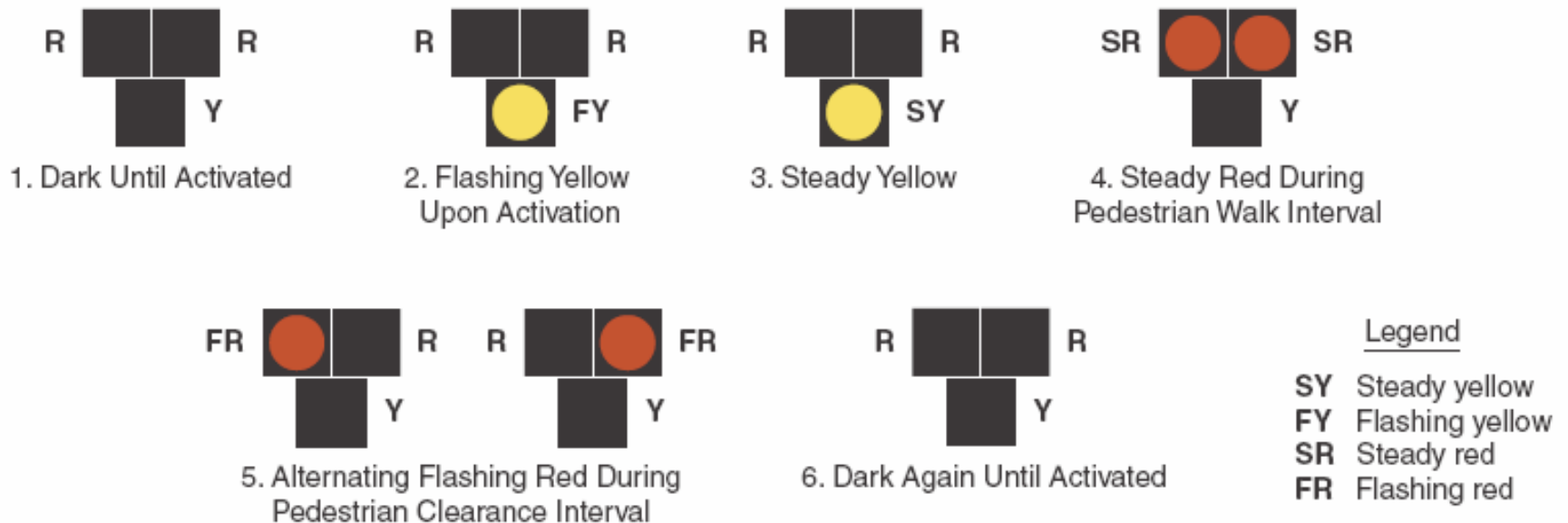


# Ped. Warning Signals

- Why install?
  - 10 to 15% of full signal cost
  - Studies show driver compliance
  - Future standards may allow flexibility
- Where to install? (criteria)
  - Street class: Major collector
  - Two-way traffic volume: >8,000 cars/day or 500 cars/ hr
  - Pedestrians: > 20 during peak hour
- Potential locations:
  - Waverley Ave/ Franklin St
  - Washington St/ Harvard St (may need overhead)
  - Crafts St/ Linwood Ave
    - Minor arterial (yes)
    - Traffic volume >8,000, >500 cars/peak hour
    - Pedestrians: 34 (7:30 to 8:30am, 4/17/08)

# Pedestrian Hybrid Signal

*Figure 4F-3. Sequence for a Pedestrian Hybrid Signal*



Comment period to July 31, 2008. FHWA will then issue new MUTCD, probably in 2009.

# 6. Dedham Street

# TC 21-08

Requesting a study in the area  
Dedham bet. Nahanton St &  
Brookline St for pedestrian safety



# Recent work

- Dedham/Nahanton
  - Added “KEEP CLEAR” pavement markings
  - Added “DO NOT BLOCK INTERSECTION” signs
- Dedham/Brookline
  - Added “walk” signals and push buttons (~\$10,000)

# New painting





# Intersection of Dedham/Nahanton





# New pedestrian lights at Dedham/Brookline





# New pedestrian light





# Crash history

- 2000: 1
- 2001: 1
- 2002: 3
- 2003: 4
- 2004: 1
- 2005: 5 (through 12/2/05)
- 6-year average = 2.5 crashes/year

# Dedham Street (Nahanton-Brookline)



Mt. Ida College

Nahanton St

Brookline St







Nahanton St

1

2



Always Green

Fire Sta. #7

1

Brookline St

Dedham St

# Recommendations

- Dedham/Nahanton

- Pedestrian signals not cost effective
- Removing or reconfiguring 'bypass' would be cost-prohibitive; no crash-based justification
- Possibly add sensor @ STOP sign to change light to red on northbound Dedham Street

- Both locations

- Lane use signs ("left-turn only")
- Restripe lane lines, crosswalks, & arrows
- Add emergency vehicle pre-emption
- Coordinate signals (wireless or hard wire)
- Restore traffic sensors, upgrade controllers

# 7. Dedham Street

(Stony Brae Rd- Countryside school)

# TC 22-08

Requesting to reduce speed limit from  
30MPH to 25 MPH on Dedham St



# Dedham St (Stony Brae Rd-Walnut St)



# Traffic Counts

Dedham St	85 percentile speed	Daily volume
(Stony Brae Rd – Countryside school)	34 MPH	4,450

Road Class= Major Collector (5,000 to 10,000 ADT)

# Conclusions

- TPR-84 indicates legal speed limit on Dedham Street is 25 mph between Parker St and Winchester St (any 30 MPH signs should be corrected)
- Police Department record shows **NO** accidents at the section in last three years
- Parking on south side near Walnut St slows traffic
- Recommend adding SCHOOL ZONE AHEAD sign on Dedham Street southbound approaching Walnut St
- Another candidate for edgelines



# 8. Truck exclusions and Speed limits

# TC ??-08

Requesting to rescind the following truck  
exclusions and speed limit reductions

# Truck Exclusions (1 of 3)

Locations	Truck %	Year taken
Bacon Street		
Bernard Street	4.4	2002
Bridge Street	1.7	2008
Centre Street		
Charlemont Street	1.7	2002
Charles Street		
Charlesbank Rd	4.8	2003
Chestnut Street		
Christina Street	2.2	2008

# Truck Exclusions (2 of 3)

Locations	Truck %	Year taken
Comm. Avenue		
Crescent Avenue	7.7	2008
Crescent Street		
Cross Street		
Davis Avenue	2.3	2008
Dearborn Street		
Goddard Street	2.7	2002
Grove Street	2.4	2008
Middlesex Road		



# Truck Exclusions (3 of 3)

Locations	Truck %	Year taken
Norwood Ave.(NC)		
Norwood Ave.(NV)		
Richmond Road		
Roland Street	1.6	2002
St. James St.		
Tremont Street	6.0	1999
Wallace Street	1.8	2002
Watertown Street		

# Speed Limits

Locations	85 <sup>th</sup> % speed	Year taken	Prop.speed	Ex. speed
Beacon Street	40 MPH	2008	30MPH	35 MPH
Centre Street			25MPH	25-35MPH
Cummings Street	24 MPH	2002	25 MPH	30 MPH
Fuller Street	35 MPH	2008	25 MPH	30 MPH
Windsor Street			25MPH	30MPH
Wolcott Street	34 MPH	2008	25 MPH	30 MPH